10. (New) Material machining belt according to Claim 1, characterized in that the surrounding region of at least one counterpiece is coated with a hardening agent for stiffening.

11. (New) Material machining belt according to Claim 2, characterized in that the surrounding region of at least one counterpiece is stiffened.

12. (New) Material machining belt according to Claim 2, characterized in that the surrounding region of at least one counterpiece is coated with a hardening agent for stiffening.

13. (New) Material machining belt according to Claim 3, characterized in that the surrounding region of at least one counterpiece is coated with a hardening agent for stiffening.

14. (New) Material machining belt according to Claim 5, characterized in that the surrounding region of at least one counterpiece is coated with a hardening agent for stiffening.

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 3-8 are amended solely to obviate the rejections made under 35 U.S.C. §112 by correcting informalities. None of these aforementioned amendments are made for patentability reasons. Newly submitted claims 9-14 are offered to clearly define the invention.

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested. It is respectfully submitted that the amendments to the claims submitted herewith obviate the rejection. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, 4 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Muller (DE 89 04 270). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

The present invention as recited in claim 1 includes the feature of "an elongated hole whose length corresponds roughly to a width of the material machining belt" wherein the expansion in "the first region is greater than the expansion in the second region." One advantage of the invention is that when the elongated hole corresponds roughly to the width of the material machining belt a counterpiece can be simply pushed into the hole on the first end (see page 3, 8th complete paragraph of the specification of the present application). An advantage of having a first region with a greater expansion than the second region is that strengthening of the connection can be achieved (see page 6, second complete paragraph and fourth complete paragraph of the specification of the present application).

Muller discloses a shape mated connection device to form an endless belt. One end of the belt has a recess with a closed edge. The recess is rectangular in shape and has a length that is smaller than the width of belt.

Muller fails to disclose "an elongated hole whose length corresponds roughly to a width of the material machining belt" as recited in claim 1, which allows a counterpiece the be simply pushed into the hole on the first end (see page 3, 8th complete paragraph of the specification of the present application). Muller at best discloses an elongated rectangular hole 18 that has a length that is **smaller** than the width of the belt 19. Muller fails to disclose "an elongated hole whose length **corresponds roughly** to a width of the material machining belt" as recited in claim 1.

Muller fails to disclose a recess wherein the expansion in "the first region is greater than the expansion in the second region" as recited in claim 1, so that strengthening of the connection can be achieved (see page 6, second complete paragraph and fourth complete paragraph of the specification of the present application). Muller discloses a rectangular hole having the **same** width along the longitudinal axis. Muller fails to disclose two expansions having **differing** widths as recited in claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 as being anticipated by Muller is respectfully requested.

Claim 3, 4 and 7 are ultimately dependent on independent claim 1 and therefore include all the features recited in claim 1. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3, 4 and 7 are respectfully requested for at least the same reasons argued in response to the rejection of claim 1 as being anticipated by Muller under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious in view of Muller. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Muller fails to teach or suggest "an elongated hole whose length corresponds roughly to a width of the material machining belt" as recited in claim 1, which allows a counterpiece the be simply pushed into the hole on the first end (see page 3, 8th complete paragraph of the specification of the present application). Muller at best discloses an elongated rectangular hole 18 that has a length that is **smaller** than the width of the belt 19. Muller fails to teach or suggest "an elongated hole whose length **corresponds roughly** to a width of the material machining belt" as recited in claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 as being obvious in view of Muller is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-8 are ultimately dependent on independent claim 1 and therefore include all the features recited in claim 1. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2-8 is respectfully requested for at least the same reasons argued in response to the rejection of claim 1 as being obvious in view of Muller under 35 U.S.C. §103.

It is further submitted that Muller fails to teach or suggest stiffening or that portions of the belt are coated with a stiffening agent as recited in claims 3-8. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3-8 are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious in view of Stubbs et al. (WO 97/38835) in view of Takagi et al. (JP 408 126 962). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

The combination of Stubbs et al. and Takagi et al. fails to teach or suggest a recess wherein the expansion in "the first region is greater than the expansion in the second region" as recited in claim 1, which allows for strengthening of the connection to be achieved (see page 6, first complete paragraph and fourth complete paragraph of the specification of the present application). At best, Stubbs et al. discloses a circular opening. Takagi et al discloses a single slit. The combination of Stubbs et al. and Takagi et al. fails to disclose two expansions having **differing** widths as recited in claim 1. In view of the foregoing withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 as being obvious in view of Stubbs et al. and Takagi et al. is respectfully requested.

Claim 2 is ultimately dependent on independent claim 1 and therefore includes all the features recited in claim 1. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 2 is respectfully requested for at least the same reasons argued in response to the rejection of claim 1 as being obvious in view of Stubbs et al. and Takagi et al. under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Claims 3-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious in view of Stubbs et al., Takagi et al. and further in view of Razien et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,828,538). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 3-8 are ultimately dependent on independent claim 1 and therefore include all the features recited in claim 1. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3-8 is respectfully requested for at least the same reasons argued in response to the rejection of claim 1 as being obvious in view of Stubbs et al., Takagi et al. and further in view of Razien et al. under 35 U.S.C. §103.

It is further submitted the combination of Stubbs et al., Takagi et al. and Razien et al. fails to teach or suggest stiffening or that portions of the belt are coated with a stiffening agent as recited in claims 3-8. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3-8 are respectfully requested.

Newly submitted claims 9-14 include the feature of having stiffened portions or portions coated with a stiffening agent. None of the cited references disclose, teach or suggest these features of the invention. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 9-14 are patentable over the cited references.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If it is believed that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if it is believed that such contact will expedite the prosecution of the application.

In the event this paper is not time filed, Applicant petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fee deficiencies or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-2036.

Respectfully submitted,

BAKER & HOSTETLER LLP

Gregory B. Kang
Reg. No. 45,273

Attachments:
Petition for Extension of Time
Appendix

Date: February 28, 2003

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1050 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036-5304
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APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS SHOWING CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 1, before the first complete paragraph:

FIELD OF INVENTION

The present invention concerns material machining belts, especially grinding and/or polishing belts, for releasable attachment to the outer surface of a grinding roll, and a method for production of material machining belts.

Page 1, after the first complete paragraph:

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

A generic material machining belt, especially a grinding or polishing belt, has a working surface, a first and second end, as well as an end connection device for formation of an endless belt.

Page 2, before the first complete paragraph:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The underlying objective of the invention is to offer a material machining belt, especially a grinding or polishing belt that can be easily separated and reclosed to an annular endless belt, and that overall has a longer service life. A method for production of such material machining belts is also to be offered.

Page 5, after the sixth complete paragraph:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention is further explained below with reference to the figures. In the figures.

Page 6, before the first complete paragraph:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Figure 1 shows, at a, b and c, three embodiment examples of recesses 11 on the first end 5 of a material machining belt 1 according to the invention. The recess 11, in the form of an eye, are formed as holes of different shape and a closed edge. They each have the shape of an elongated hole, the longitudinal axis 25 of the hole lying parallel to the long sides 27 of the material machining belt 1, and the lengths 21 of the hole corresponding to roughly the width 23 of the material machining belt 1.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 9-14 have been added.

Claims 1 and 3-8 have been amended.

1. (Twice Amended) Material machining belt, especially a grinding or polishing belt, with releasable shape-mated connection device on [the]an end to form an endless belt, in which the shape-mated connection device is formed with a recess with a closed edge on the end and a counterpiece on [the]an other end, characterized in that the recess is designed as an elongated hole whose length corresponds roughly to [the]a width of the material machining belt, [and whose]the recess having a longitudinal axis that runs parallel to [the] long sides of the

material machining belt, in that the elongated hole has a first and a second region, in which [the]an expansion in [the]a transverse direction of the material machining belt, of the first region is greater than the expansion of the second region, and in that the first region faces the end of the belt and the second region faces away from the belt the end of the belt.

3. (Twice Amended) Material machining belt according to Claim 1, characterized in that a surrounding region of the elongated hole [and/or at least one counterpiece] is stiffened.

4. (Twice Amended) Material machining belt according to Claim 1, characterized in that the surrounding region of at least one recess [and/or at least one counterpiece] is coated with a hardening agent for stiffening.

5. (Amended) Material machining belt according to Claim 2, characterized in that a surrounding region of the elongated hole [and/or at least one counterpiece] is stiffened.

6. (Amended) Material machining belt according to Claim 2, characterized in that the surrounding region of at least one recess [and/or at least one counterpiece] is coated with a hardening agent for stiffening.

7. (Amended) Material machining belt according to Claim 3, characterized in that the surrounding region of at least one recess [and/or at least one counterpiece] is coated with a hardening agent for stiffening.

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8. (Amended) Material machining belt according to Claim 5, characterized in that the surrounding region of at least one recess [and/or at least one counterpiece] is coated with a hardening agent for stiffening.